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THE EDITOR

American travelers abroad this year are returning, and their opinions of the exposition at Paris vary but little. Those whose judgment is of value say that the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 has not been eclipsed by the extraordinary endeavors of the French. The buildings at the Paris Exposition are crowded, while the general arrangement lacks the largeness of plan and view, the serenity and simplicity of our White City by the lake.

There have been the most provoking delays, and the Palace of the Fine Arts was the first to present a completed appearance. The great building, which will be a permanent one, has a fine façade and an impressive interior. What pleases the American visitor is the complimentary position and uniformly high standard of the United States section. The exhibit holds a position in international art second only to the French. This is a remarkable showing for so young a nation. As France has been our instructor in art, it is not strange that our art should be understood and appreciated by the French critics. Out of 221 names which appear in the catalogue of painters, only fifty fail to acknowledge some great French painter as master. In the distribution of awards America takes the lead of other nations. Two medals of honor have been bestowed upon Whistler and Sargent, the former also enjoying the very unique honor of a medal of honor for etching, and gold medals have been given to seven other American painters. We learn that there are to be three medals given to American sculptors, and rumor suggests the names of Saint Gaudens, French, and MacMonnies. We hope this choice may prove to be the one decided on by the jury, as no better selection could be made. The management of the American art section, under the direction of Mr. J. B. Cauldwell, has been very just, and meets with the heartiest approval of all unprejudiced Americans who have our interests at heart. We take very great pleasure in recognizing again the admirable service Mr. Cauldwell and his able juries have performed, and to them much of the credit is due for the advanced position our art has taken in its competition with the rest of the world.



The movement in favor of acquiring works of art produced by Americans for American collections is more and more general and vigorous every year. The Boston Museum of the Fine Arts has made a very commendable beginning, and we hope that the new building will be arranged with galleries in which the work of Amer-

icans in painting and sculpture may be chronologically arranged. This is an important use for our great museums of art in our principal cities, for there is at present no institution where our art may be comprehensively studied. Some day we may hope for a national bureau of the fine arts, with a national museum of art in Washington, in which a collection of our native art might be brought together. There is no better time than the present for making such a collection, but its government should be far from the appointing power of politicians. It would be a means of stimulating our art if we had some final haven of fame for it, as has France with her Luxembourg and her Louvre. A national salon to be held annually in New York City would offer an opportunity for a choice of the best and characteristic in current art. We noted last month this movement toward the establishment of an annual salon, and it is more than probable that the question will be agitated with renewed vigor the coming season. The salon might well be the stepping-stone to a national museum. Our growth in art is so sure and rapid that what a few years ago might appear chimerical now only needs to be suggested to be carried to completion.



We hear not a little of the decadence of the French school. The masters of the past are not being succeeded by the younger men of the present. The salon of 1900 was very weak, while the exposition shows that the French painters are not more than holding their own. They have a few masterly sculptors, but the younger men are without ideas, although their technical excellence cannot be overlooked. Integrity, morality, purity, character, count in art as in any other expression of human activity, and in the exhibition of contemporary French art many of these virtues are conspicuously wanting. It is too much to say that they are wanting in the French character as a whole, but we are warranted in drawing the conclusion that there is sufficient lack of these finer qualities to degrade much of their art. Whatever may be said of American art in general, it is not decadent, it is virile and honest, and much of it has an elevation of purpose and sentiment worthy of the best art of any age. To protect and develop this quality while we are finding expression for our native themes is the mission of American art. It is a splendid work, and many honorable workers are already toiling in its vineyards and looking toward the harvest.

NOTE.—The illustrations of the article on American Painting in the Boston Art Museum in this issue of BRUSH AND PENCIL are reproduced from photographs made by Foster Brothers, Boston, Mass.